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3 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING**
4 **OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**
5 **OF THE NATIONAL BISON ASSOCIATION**
6 **November 21, 2019**
7 **Via Telephone Conference Call**
8

9 The regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Bison
10 Association was convened at 5 p.m. MDT, November 21, 2019 via telephone conference call,
11 pursuant to the bylaws and notification by the Executive Director.

12 Present were:

13 Roy Liedtke	Dick Gehring
14 Tom Barthel	Robert Johnson
15 Brian Grubb	Boyd Meyer
16 Jeremy Allemann	Mimi Hillenbrand
17 Keith Yearout	Alan Douglass
18 Donnis Baggett	Kristopher Kelley
19 Debbie Thieman	
20 Mike Faith (advisory)	

21 Absent was Gerald Parsons.

22 Also attending were Dave Carter, Jim Matheson, Karen Conley, and Connor Elliott. Roy
23 Liedtke presided, and Dave Carter served as recording secretary.

24 Dick Gehring provided a report of the president. The past two months have been
25 extremely busy. He reported that the NBA participation in the National Association of Farm
26 Broadcasting was very successful. He also mentioned that he and Dave Carter have been
27 working with the larger commercial marketers to assess the market conditions and outlook. He
28 noted that the 25th anniversary conference in January is shaping up to be a great event.

29 The chair directed the board's attention to the minutes of the meeting of October 1,
30 2019, which minutes had been previously circulated to the board. No changes were made. A
31 motion was made by Robert Johnson to approve the minutes as distributed. Said motion was
32 seconded and carried.

1 The chair directed the board's attention to the minutes of the Finance Committee from
2 September 26, 2019, and October 23, 2019. Dave Carter noted corrections in the October 23rd
3 minutes. A motion was made by Mimi Hillenbrand to accept those minutes as corrected. Said
4 motion was seconded and carried.

5 The chair called on Donnis Baggett, chair of the Finance Committee, to provide a year-
6 to-date (YTD) financial report. Total income in September of \$33,677 was \$6,058 below
7 budget. YTD gross income of \$681,246 is \$46,914 below budget. The shortfall in the Summer
8 Conference benefit auction, and the timing of grant reimbursements are primary factors. Total
9 expenses in September of \$62,578 were \$17,370 above budget. YTD gross expenses of
10 \$718,857 were \$1,886 below budget. After adjustments and designated reserve, September net
11 results of (\$30,001) were \$23,600 below budget. The YTD net results of (\$45,473) were
12 \$38,363 below budget. Total equity in the NBA on September 30th was \$297,722, compared to
13 \$309,655 on September 30th, 2018. A total of \$39,000 in grant reimbursements are pending. A
14 motion was made by Donnis Baggett to approve the financial report as presented. Said motion
15 was seconded and carried.

16 Jim Matheson provided a year-to-date membership report. The membership count as of
17 November 18th is 1,131, which is an increase of 19 over September 27th. Ten of those additional
18 members are in the active category, and three are in the three-year membership category.

19 The chair called on directors for Regional reports.

20 Robert Johnson provided a report of the International Director. He reported that weather
21 has been a challenge for Canadian producers. The Canadian Bison Association annual meeting
22 is scheduled next week. There are 52 animals consigned for the Show and Sale.

23 Alan Douglass provided a report from Region I. Western Bison Association is having
24 their show and sale the first weekend in December.

25 Deb Thiemann provided a report from Region II. She reported that the Rocky Mountain
26 Bison Association is beginning to work on Summer Conference 2020.

27 Mimi Hillenbrand provide a report on Region III. She reported that the Dakota Territory
28 Buffalo Association and North Dakota Bison Association are discussing a potential merger.

29 Keith Yearout provided a report from Region IV. There are a few big sales planned in
30 his region.

1 Jeremy Allemann reported on Region V. He reported that the Minnesota Legends of the Fall
2 sale is scheduled for November 30th with 180 head consigned.

3 Reporting on Region VI, Roy Liedtke mentioned that the Texas Bison Association had
4 an excellent fall meeting. The Oklahoma Bison Association had a sale on November 2nd.

5 Brian Grubb provided a report from Region VII. He informed the board that longtime
6 member Wayne Calloway had passed away.

7 Kristopher Kelley provided a report from Region VIII. He reported that some producers
8 in South Carolina are dealing with a plant closure.

9 Mike Faith, advisory member, provided a report from the InterTribal Buffalo Council.
10 He provided an update on the Indian Buffalo Management Act, which was introduced this
11 month by U.S. Rep. Don Young (R-AK) and two co-sponsors. He noted that the legislation
12 would provide standalone funding for the ITBC. He said that the bison industry needs to work
13 on getting bison meat in school lunch programs. He said that he is working to get more ITBC
14 members to attend the NBA Winter Conference.

15 The chair called on Jim Matheson for a report on the 2020 Winter Conference. Laurie
16 Demeritt, CEO of the Hartman Group consumer research firm, will provide our keynote address
17 on Wednesday afternoon. Rob Bleifer, the executive chef of the Food Network, will provide a
18 Thursday luncheon keynote address and will serve as the judge of our bison soup recipe contest.
19 Mr. Matheson noted that registration is lagging in comparison with 2019 levels. We are about
20 10 percent below last year in room reservations.

21 Dave Carter reported that the NBA is pushing sponsorships for winter conference.
22 Harper Cattle, L.L.C. has agreed to be the presenting sponsor at a cost of \$15,000. In total, there
23 has been \$38,000 pledged in gross sponsorship revenue. However, the association has
24 developed a special incentive program this year that provides our sponsors with an amount of
25 “bison bucks” commensurate with their level of support. The bison bucks can be used for
26 conference registration, *Bison World* advertising, memberships, and other NBA services. Of the
27 \$38,000 in sponsorships, \$7,350 will be allocated to bison bucks deferred revenue.

28 Jim Matheson reported that the Summer Conference Planning Committee met prior to
29 the board meeting. He is working with the Rocky Mountain Bison Association to finalize plans
30 for the 2020 Summer Conference in Cheyenne, WY. He proposed that the conference be

1 scheduled for June 21-24, 2020 at the Little America Hotel in Cheyenne. The room rate at Little
2 America is \$122/night. June 22nd is Fathers' Day, so the committee may schedule a welcome
3 reception that day. He also noted that the conference may be a half-day shorter. Tours will be
4 held at Cold Creek Buffalo Ranch and Memphis Ranch, both conveniently located near
5 Cheyenne. A motion was made by Mimi Hillenbrand to set the 2020 Summer Conference for
6 June 22-24 at Little America in Cheyenne. Said motion was seconded and carried.

7 Dave Carter provided a legislative report.

8 He noted that the NBA is continuing to work with Sens. John Hoeven (R-ND) and
9 Michael Bennet (D-CO) to line up co-sponsors for the Truth in Buffalo Labeling Act in the
10 Senate, in addition to Sens. Mike Braun (R-IN), John Thune (R-SD), and Tina Smith (D-MN).
11 On the House side, U.S. Rep. Ed Perlmutter (D-CO) has agreed to serve as the prime sponsor
12 for legislation in that chamber. U.S. Rep Jim McGovern (D-MA) is committed to be a sponsor
13 of the bill as well. Reps. Liz Cheney (R-WY) and Vicky Jo Hartzler (R-MO) are interested in
14 serving as Republican sponsors of the bill.

15 Regarding international trade issues, North American Bison, L.L.C. and Southwest
16 Bison were both included in the recently completed USDA-sponsored trade mission to Mexico.
17 This is the first time that the bison industry has been included in a USDA trade mission. Mexico
18 is not officially open for U.S. bison meat exports, but Mr. Carter said he anticipates that the
19 market will be open for U.S. bison by year's end. USDA Foreign Agricultural Service is also
20 working to establish a unique HS (Harmonized System) code for bison exports. Currently, bison
21 is included in the HS codes for beef. Having unique codes for bison will allow us to better
22 monitor current exports, and plan for future growth. USDA FAS continues to work to open
23 Japan, Korea and Taiwan for bison meat exports.

24 Several bills have been introduced in Congress to address the difficulties livestock
25 haulers are encountering with the Electronic Logging Device regulations. As the Department of
26 Transportation works to implement new Hours of Service regulations, the number of legislative
27 proposals attempting to address this issue continues to multiply. The NBA has endorsed those
28 bills. Mr. Carter reported that he had reached out to some of the major haulers of bison for input
29 to file comments with the Department of Transportation during a recent open comment period,
30 but received insufficient input to develop a statement.

1 Mr. Carter reported that the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service is continuing to
2 move forward to implement the bison purchase contract that was awarded in September. Robert
3 Johnson recommended that the NBA work actively with tribal interests to put in orders for the
4 current commodity purchase program. Mr. Carter reported that the National Bison Association
5 is preparing to formally request that the USDA Food and Nutrition Service include bison on the
6 list of foods available to be purchased for all federal food and nutrition programs, including
7 school lunch programs. Consensus was expressed to move forward with the request. Mr. Carter
8 noted that the NBA may want to consider requesting a Section 32 commodity purchase through
9 USDA if market conditions deteriorate. That program is designed to help remove surplus
10 commodities from the marketplace. Robert Johnson asked if a Section 32 would disrupt the
11 commercial marketplace. Dick Gehring said that moving some inventory from the marketplace
12 would be beneficial. Boyd Meyer suggested that we hold that request in check. Consensus was
13 expressed to have this topic on the agenda for the board meeting in January.

14 Mr. Carter noted that the subject of developing a USDA administered research and
15 promotion program had arisen during meetings with the agency in Washington, D.C. in
16 September. The beef program is controversial, and unpopular among many beef cow-calf
17 producers. However, developing a program would generate additional resources for needed
18 activities, and it could be structured to not include the most unpopular elements of the beef
19 checkoff. Mr. Carter said that several participants in the 2019 Washington Roundup encouraged
20 the NBA to take a stronger look into this issue. Discussion was held. Consensus was expressed
21 to discuss this topic during the membership meeting in January.

22 Mr. Carter reported that the NBA is working with USDA AMS to develop a monthly
23 report of live bison prices, which will include input from private treaty sales, as well as bison
24 production sales results.

25 Mr. Carter also reported that the NBA is continuing to support the InterTribal Buffalo
26 Council in its efforts to enact The Indian Buffalo Management Act.

27 The U.S. Senate once again passed a resolution declaring the first Saturday in November
28 as National Bison Day. Jim Matheson travelled to Washington, D.C. to participate in a
29 celebration on Capitol Hill on November 14th.

30

1 Mr. Carter said that the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) is
2 scheduled to act on the AAFCO Ingredient Definitions Committee recommendation to establish
3 two new model definitions that will require water buffalo to be properly labeled in pet food.
4 That will take place during the association's mid-year meeting January 19-23, 2020 in
5 Albuquerque, NM. Mr. Carter said he is seeking someone to represent the NBA at that meeting
6 as it will be held the same time as Winter Conference.

7 The chair called for committee reports.

8 Dave Carter provided a report of the Science and Research Committee. He, along with
9 Committee Chair Dr. Dave Hunter and National Buffalo Foundation member John Flocchini,
10 met with South Dakota State University officials in Brookings, SD on October 18th to take the
11 next steps for formally establishing the Center of Excellence at SDSU. The center will be
12 located in existing office space SDSU leases in Rapid City. Dr. Kristi Cammack, who works
13 with the SDSU experiment station there, will serve as director of the Center. The university is
14 covering the cost of the office space and Dr. Cammack's salary, so any funding generated can
15 be directed to research projects. The Science and Research Committee and the National Buffalo
16 Foundation are in the process of establishing a Memorandum of Understanding specifying the
17 priorities for the Center, and the roles and responsibilities of the supporting organizations.

18 Mr. Carter also provided a report of the Commercial Marketers' Committee. He said that
19 the NBA and Canadian Bison Association collaborated to conduct a special survey with the
20 larger marketers and feeders in each country. This "Gatekeepers" Survey is separate from the
21 twice-annual market survey, and was designed to provide the larger participants with
22 information that would be useful in making planning decisions for the next 12-18 months. A
23 webinar was conducted with the survey participants on November 20th to review the
24 information. Dick Gehring said that it is important for marketers and feeders to work together to
25 build the industry, and not to cannibalize each other.

26 Boyd Meyer and Jim Matheson provided a report of the Gold Trophy Show and Sale
27 Committee. Entries are now open for the 2020 GTSS, and nearly 60 head of live bison have
28 been consigned to date. The bull classes are close to being full. Robert Johnson asked if the
29 ultra RFID tag will be allowed. Jim Matheson said that the committee will be looking at that
30 with National Western Stock Show officials. The future of the market class is uncertain.

1 Because of changes in the market for drop, the cost of processing carcasses will increase to
2 \$175/hd. from \$70/hd. in 2019. The committee agreed to adjust the entry fee to \$210/hd.,
3 compared to \$175/hd. this year. The committee also voted to drop the market class sale unless at
4 least 12 carcasses are consigned. Only one entry has been consigned.

5 Connor Elliott, chair of the North American Bison Registry, joined the meeting to report
6 on the North American Bison Registry. He reported that UpperHouse Web Development has
7 delivered a quote of \$900 to program the NABR software to allow administrators to access a
8 new panel and upload an Excel based spreadsheet, based on specific formatting from the
9 University of California Davis lab. This will allow import of animal data into a website
10 database, for inclusion of existing animal registry. Discussion was held. Mr. Elliott said that the
11 programming would be done over a period of 2-3 weeks. Tom Barthel made a motion to
12 approve the expenditure of \$900 to authorize the programming. The motion was seconded and
13 carried.

14 Mr. Elliott mentioned that NABR has adopted two proposed recommendations.

15 The first resolution reads:

16 *The NABR accept the inclusion of all accredited forms of DNA analysis which have been*
17 *approved by NABR Committee process, which includes the unanimous consent of the NABR*
18 *Advisory Council. This process shall constitute the requisite credibility a lab, and technology,*
19 *possesses for use to (a) register bison (b) perform eligibility analysis (c) provide data for*
20 *parentage and lineage association and (d) result in official acknowledgement by the North*
21 *American Bison Registry and the National Bison Association.*

22 *Purpose:*

- 23 • *To cause a formal collaborative environment for enhancing bison knowledge.*
- 24 • *To establish requisite industry accreditation by the NBA.*
- 25 • *To perform and function as ‘a species registry’.*

26

27 Discussion was held. Mr. Elliott said that the intention of the recommendation was to expand
28 the types of DNA technology that could be used by the Registry. Consensus was expressed to
29 delay action on this until the January meeting.

30 The second recommendation reads:

1 *Any person or entity whom is not a member of the NBA may utilize the DNA testing services*
2 *(not including registration) offered by the NABR for the cost of \$45 per test.*

3 Discussion was held. Mr. Elliott mentioned that NBA members can utilize the testing for
4 \$35/head. Donnis Baggett said that he was concerned about offering services, even at a higher
5 fee, to non-NBA members. Following discussion, the board declined to act on the
6 recommendation.

7 Mr. Carter provided a report on the NBA Growth Fund.

8 The National Bison Association is formally launching its new program, *Partner in Bison*
9 *Restoration*, as a way to team up with bison meat marketers and companies selling products
10 with bison ingredients to tell the story of the positive role our animals play in the health of the
11 ecosystem, communities and people. Participants in the program will pay an annual fee of
12 \$4,500 to the Growth Fund for the right to use the logo on their packaging and in their
13 marketing materials. He noted that marketers currently paying into the Growth Fund can apply
14 those funds toward the right to use the logo. The Partner logo also includes the URL:
15 bison1million.com. Anyone going to that URL will be directed to a new page within our
16 website that will contain information on the environmental and nutritional benefits of bison.
17 Rocky Mountain Natural Meats, Broadleaf Meats and Merrick Pet Food have signed up for the
18 program.

19 Mr. Carter noted that the staff is working on materials that will help members utilize the
20 recently trademarked term: *Nature's Original Plant-Based Protein*. The NBA has developed
21 some terms of use for anyone using this logo. Several members have already requested
22 permission to utilize this in their marketing materials. Consensus was expressed to allow NBA
23 members to use this as benefit of membership. Donnis Baggett recommended that we develop a
24 brief agreement form for anyone downloading the logo.

25 Mr. Carter said that the staff is increasing promotion of the Growth Fund in our member
26 communication vehicles, including *Bison World*, Weekly Update and Facebook. We need
27 continued support from individual board members to encourage contributions to the fund.

28 Mr. Carter reviewed recent activities funded by the Growth Fund. Those include:

1 ShiftCon – A conference of social media influencers held in Atlanta, GA in October. Mimi
2 Hillenbrand and Carrie Bennett of Colorado helped provide information to about 250
3 attendees at a bison luncheon sponsored by NBA.

4
5 Impact Unleashed – The NBA sponsored an evening reception during this event, which was
6 hosted by the Pet Sustainability Coalition, a Boulder-based non-profit that works with pet
7 food companies. Mr. Carter provided a Ted-Style talk at the event.

8
9 FFA National Convention – Jim Matheson was joined by Pete and Erica Cook to host our booth
10 at FFA this year in Indianapolis, IN. There were 70,000 attendees. The bison head mount
11 ring-toss was a huge hit. We are now scheduling webinars for FFA advisors that
12 expressed an interest when stopping by our booth. The info. graphics were very popular.

13
14 National Agricultural Bankers Conference – Mr. Matheson hosted our booth at this event,
15 which was held November 10-13 in Dallas, TX.

16
17 National Association of Farm Broadcasting -- Mr. Carter and Mr. Gehring conducted more
18 than 30 radio/TV interviews with radio and television broadcasters from across the
19 country at this event, which was held November 15 in Kansas City.

20 Mr. Carter provided an update on activities being conducted through the USDA
21 Farmers' Market Promotion Program grant. We have formally been granted a one-year
22 extension on our FMPP grant. The NBA is now actively promoting our *BuySome Bison* app,
23 which links potential customers with local bison meat, agritourism opportunities, and other
24 bison items. The app is designed for users of our Buyers' Guide to be able to be listed at no
25 cost. Mr. Carter said he is reaching out to larger commercial outlets like Ted's Montana Grill,
26 Whole Foods, and Kroger to be listed on a fee-to-participate basis. The Farmers' Market
27 Promotion Program grant allocates up to \$22,000 to promote the new app in publications and
28 through social media.

29 Jim Matheson provided a report on activities conducted through the USDA Risk
30 Management Agency grant. He has been actively coordinating webinars and other training

1 sessions to promote usage of the Bison Producers app. The NBA will need to establish a fee
2 structure to cover the cost of administering the app.

3 Karen Conley provided a report of the communications director. She reported that on-line
4 readership of *Bison World* is increasing. The advertising base is growing for the magazine. The
5 NBA Facebook page now has more than 6,000 followers. Ms. Conley has implemented a
6 Teachable Tuesday post on Facebook. The National Bison Day post had more than 38,325
7 reaches. The Facebook post featuring *Nature's Original Plant-Based Protein* had 14,600
8 reaches. She reported that she and Mr. Carter have been talking about trying to implement a
9 podcast for NBA.

10 Mr. Carter said that he had represented the NBA at several additional forums in addition to
11 the Growth Fund-supported activities listed above. Those included:

- 12 • Society of Environmental Journalists' meeting, Fort Collins, CO
- 13 • American Bison Society Conference, Santa Fe, NM, October 28-Nov. 1
- 14 • Nationwide Insurance Underwriters' Meeting, Des Moines, IA, November 12th.
- 15 • Bison Day Educational Event, Denver Zoo, November 8.

16 Mr. Carter also reported that he is scheduled to represent the NBA at the Canadian Bison
17 Association in Regina, SK November 23-26, and will be at the Kansas Buffalo Association
18 annual sale on December 6-7.

19 The next board meeting will be held at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 21st.

20 There being no additional business to come before the board, and upon motion made,
21 seconded and carried, the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

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23 Respectfully Submitted,

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27 Tom Barthel, Secretary

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1 David E. Carter, Recording Secretary

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